

ELLENBERGER PARK
MASTER PLAN
1989

Prepared by:

DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF PLANNING

Prepared for:

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Approved by:

BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
GENERAL RESOLUTION NO. 106, 1989

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 89-CPS-R-3

GENERAL RESOLUTION NO. 106, 1989

BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION

CONSOLIDATED CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION OF THE CONSOLIDATED CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS THAT:

The agreement by and between the Department of Parks and Recreation of the City of Indianapolis and DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT
in the amount of N/A
calling for MASTER PLAN FOR ELLENBERGER PARK

The form of which is to be approved by the Department Attorney, be and is hereby APPROVED.

FURTHER, RESOLVED, that the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation is hereby authorized and directed to execute such agreement for and in behalf of the Department.

BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONSOLIDATED CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS

By: Franz Arthur Strong

Franz Arthur Strong, Chairman

Richard Laehr
Richard Laehr

Archie Mabon
Archie Mabon

Milton Booth
Milton Booth

Charles Kendall
Charles Kendall

Margaret A. Drew
Assistant Corporation Counsel

Deborah S. Hamilton
Deborah S. Hamilton, Secretary

10/5/89
Date

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

DOCKET NO. 89-CPS-R-3

RESOLUTION 89-CPS-R-3, AMENDING A SEGMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE
OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, ELLENBERGER PARK
MASTER PLAN.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Metropolitan Development Commission of
Marion County, Indiana, that, pursuant to I.C. 36-7-4, the
Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County, Indiana,
hereby amends the COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN FOR MARION
COUNTY, INDIANA, by the adoption of the ELLENBERGER PARK MASTER
PLAN, which is attached hereto, incorporated herein by same as
an AMENDMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION
COUNTY, INDIANA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Metropolitan
Development Commission certify copies of this RESOLUTION
89-CPS-R-3, AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION
COUNTY, INDIANA, ELLENBERGER PARK MASTER PLAN.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of the Department of
Metropolitan Development is directed to mail or deliver
certified copies of this RESOLUTION 89-CPS-R-3, upon final
adoption, as an AMENDMENT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF
MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, to the legislative authorities of all
incorporated cities and towns in Marion County, Indiana, the
Mayor of the City of Indianapolis, the city-county Council of
Indianapolis and Marion County, and the Board of Commissioners
of Marion County, Indiana. The Director shall also file one (1)
copy of the Resolution in the office of the Recorder of Marion
County.

James A. Webb, Sec.
Presiding Officer
Metropolitan Development Commission

Mary Anne White
Secretary
Metropolitan Development Commission

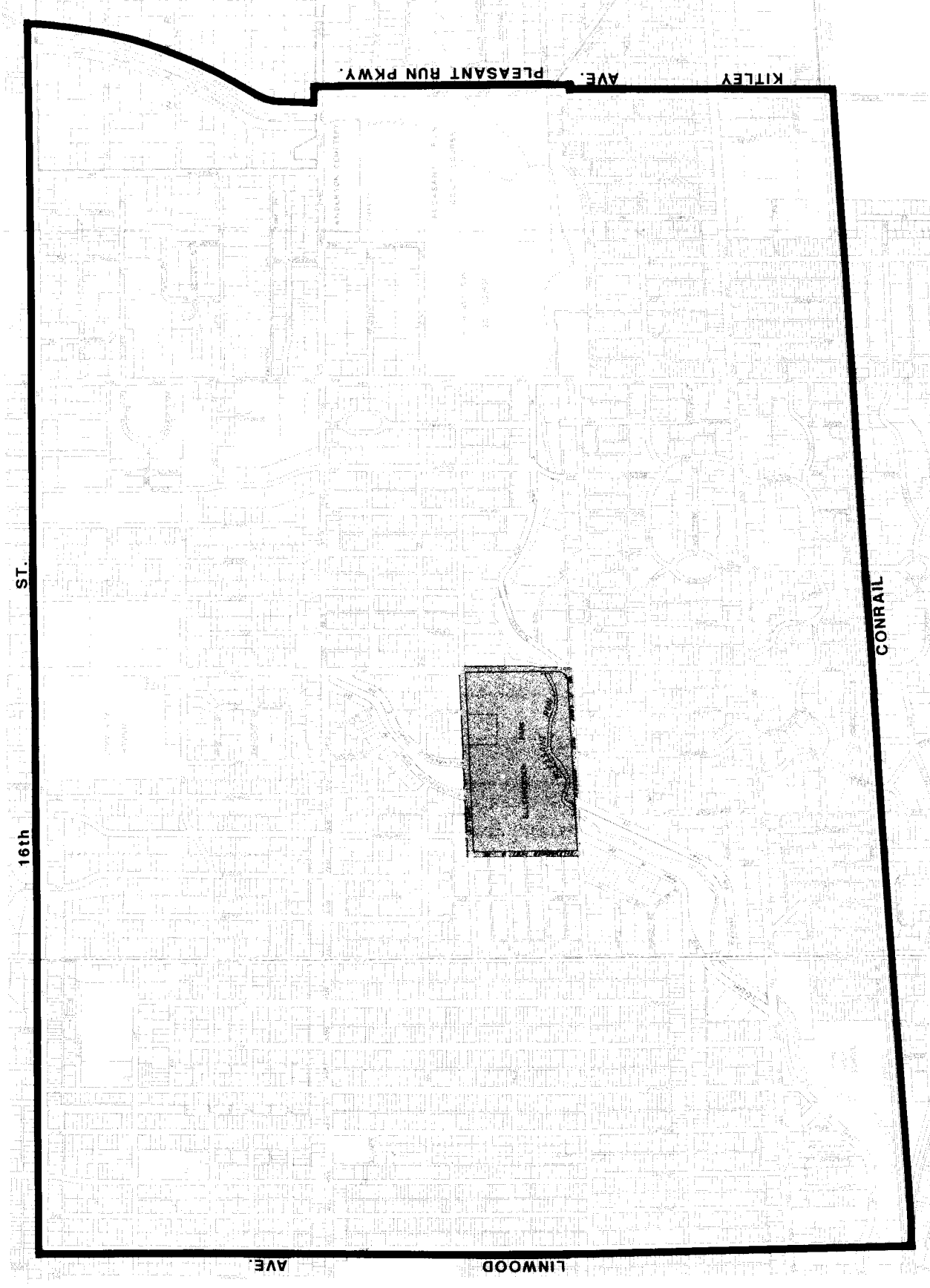
APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM
AND ADEQUACY THIS 15th
DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1989

James B. Burroughs
James B. Burroughs
Chief Counsel

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VICINITY MAP FOR ELLENBERGER



INTRODUCTION

Ellenberger Park, 5301 E. St. Clair, is comprised of 42 acres of gently rolling landscape and mature trees. A section of the park is also intensively developed for recreational purposes, including an ice skating rink, swimming pool, tennis courts, ball diamonds, playfields, and playgrounds. Because of its size and facilities, Ellenberger Park is categorized by the Department of Parks and Recreation as a community park. The other categories for City parks are Regional, Neighborhood, and Subneighborhood.

This city park originated in 1909 when the City purchased Ellenberger Woods (31.7 acres) from John Ellenberger, a city pioneer who settled in the Irvington area in 1853. The purchase price was \$500 per acre. Additional land was purchased in 1911 and 1915 bringing the total number of park acres to 42 -- its current size.

The original development of the park included two tennis courts, two baseball diamonds, football facilities, walks, swings, benches, and drinking fountains. These facilities are very similar to those existing today.

In 1925 the name of Ellenberger Park was changed to Jameson Park in honor of Dr. Henry Jameson who had served a long tenure as a member of the Indianapolis Park Board. The name was changed back to Ellenberger Park in 1926 because the community could not become accustomed to the new name.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS

A community park is designed to serve several neighborhoods. Furthermore, users should be able to easily access the park by foot, bicycle, or car without major obstacles. Using these criteria, the service area of Ellenberger Park was defined for the master planning process as that area bordered by Linwood Avenue on the west, 16th street on the north, Kitley Avenue on the east, and the Baltimore and Ohio railroad tracks on the south (See facing page).

The most recent demographic information available for this planning process is found in the 1980 Census of Population and Housing. To create a context and to identify possible trends, this information was compared to the 1970 Census.

The service area is generally characterized by an overall decrease in population from 1970 - 1980, with a proportionally greater decrease of the school age population. In the north and east sections of the service area, there has been an actual increase in the 60-64 age group. There has been a decrease in the number of married couples with an

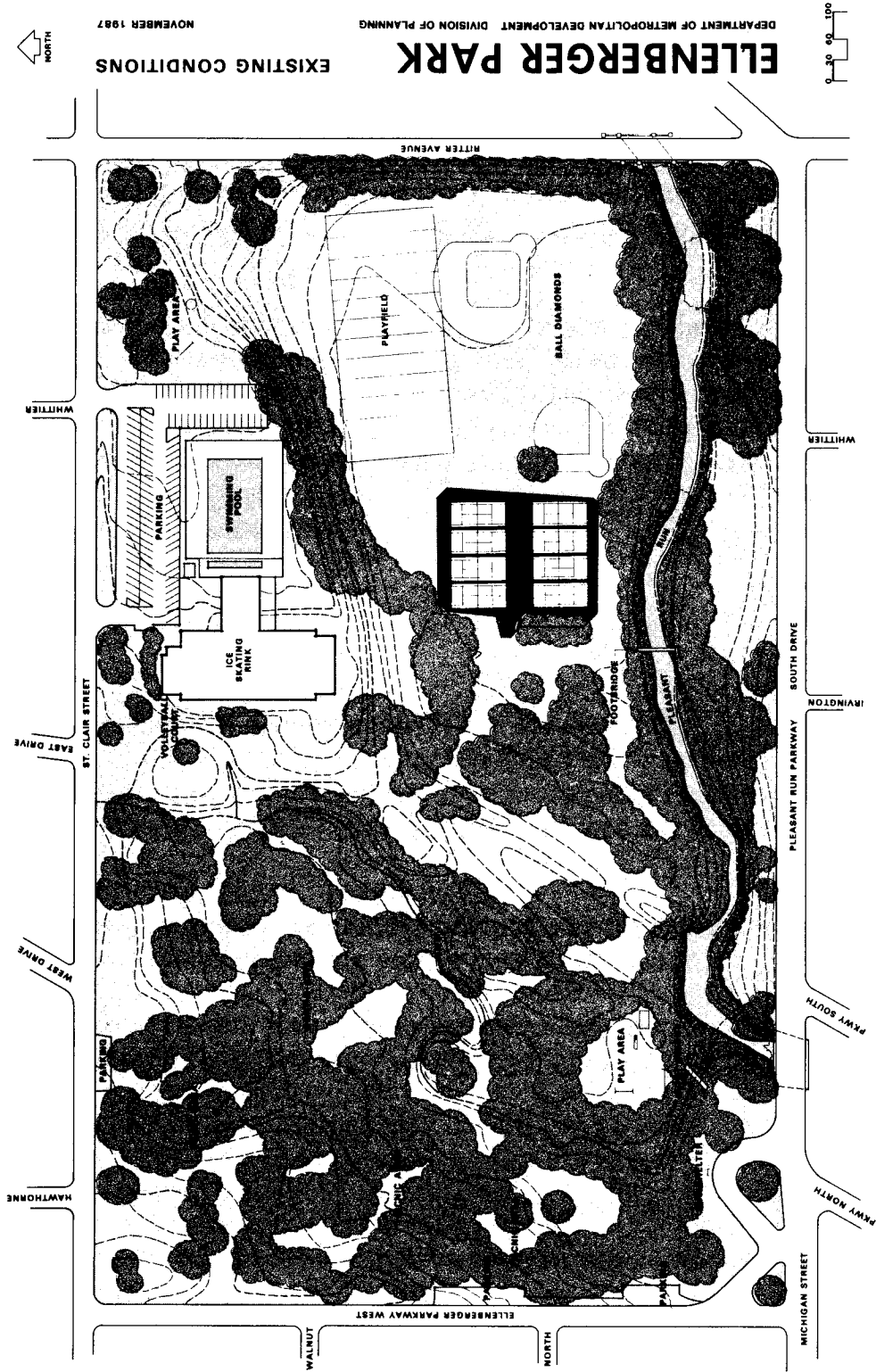


Figure 1

increase in the number of single men and women living in the area. Although the population is aging, it can be predicted that at some point younger people will start replacing older residents, thus perpetuating a demographic cycle.

This neighborhood has a very stable renter/owner ratio as compared to the county as a whole. While there have been land use changes (variances and rezonings) in the defined service area, land uses within a two block radius of the park have remained almost unchanged from the original time of development. Because of the stability of land use in the service area (primarily owner occupied residential) and the cyclical nature of age related demographics, overall changes in the focus of Ellenberger Park are not warranted.

SITE CONDITIONS AND MASTER PLAN PROPOSALS

Before specific discussion of site conditions and master plan proposals, it will be helpful to discuss the nature of the use areas which compose Ellenberger Park. The park can basically be divided into three use areas: the active recreation area covering roughly the east half of the park starting north of Pleasant Run; the passive recreation or natural area in the west section of the park; and the undeveloped area south of Pleasant Run, which has elements of the passive recreation area, but because of its juxtaposition with Pleasant Run Parkway can never have the same tranquility.

Through the master planning process, and with the support of the community, it was determined that the basic boundaries of the use areas should be maintained. The percentage of Ellenberger Park devoted to active recreation facilities and other accessory uses is high compared to other parks. This high density development, combined with the community's strong identification with the wooded area of the park (the park property was once known as Ellenberger Woods) resulted in a plan which restricted active recreation only to areas where it currently exists.

Please refer to Figures 1 and 2 for current conditions and master plan proposals.

Pleasant Run

Pleasant Run, with its densely vegetated banks, is the dominant feature in the southern portion of the park. During the winter, because the deciduous plants have lost their leaves, the creek is visually well integrated into the park. This seasonal openness allows park patrons to enjoy the pleasant sights and sounds of the flowing water. In the summer dense plant growth returns to isolate Pleasant Run from the rest of the park. It is therefore recommended that some form of very selective clearing (understory only)

occur along short segments of the creek's banks. Because the contents of combined sewers empty at times into Pleasant Run at locations both upstream and within the park itself, the clearing along the creek's banks should provide visual access only. Physical access to the water should be strongly discouraged.

There is currently one footbridge that crosses Pleasant Run within Ellenberger Park. This footbridge is in a central location and appears to be sufficient to meet the needs of the park users. Selective clearing should not occur at this location due to the pleasant sense of enclosure produced by the plant materials around the footbridge.

Another footbridge is located across a drainage area leading into Pleasant Run at the southwest edge of the park. This footbridge should also be retained to provide efficient access for residents living in the areas south and west of Ellenberger Park.

Picnic/Natural Area

The results of the initial public meeting (see appendix C for complete listing of meetings) indicated that area residents want to retain the natural character of Ellenberger Park by correcting erosion problems and planting more trees. Currently, many of the trees located in the park appear to be on the decline. Some young trees have been planted in the eastern section of the park. It is recommended, however, that additional trees should also be planted in the undeveloped western area to maintain the wooded character so important to the identity of the park.

The local community also supports the maintenance of the west section of the park as a natural area for passive recreation such as walking and picnicking. Therefore, all proposals for this area should serve only to enhance these pursuits. An improved walking path, composed of a permeable surface, around the perimeter of the park that connects with paths in other areas of the park is in keeping with this goal. Furthermore, several benches should be located along this path. Improved parking to allow better access to picnic facilities will, at the same time, provide an opportunity to improve the appearance of the park's edges.

Michigan Street/Ellenberger Parkway Intersection

The southwest corner of Ellenberger Park contains a confusing intersection which is made worse by the existence of a bus turn-around on Pleasant Run Parkway just east of Ellenberger Parkway (see figure 3). Currently, motorists traveling north on Pleasant Run Parkway North Drive are not required to stop as they approach the Michigan Street/Pleasant Run Parkway intersection. This creates a potentially hazardous situation if motorists are turning left from Ellenberger Parkway. To eliminate this confusion, the "Y" intersection at Ellenberger Parkway and Michigan Street should be converted to a simple "T" intersection and a stop sign should be installed for north bound traffic on Pleasant Run Parkway North Drive. In addition to this change, the current asphalt bus turnaround should be removed and a single pull off lane should be added immediately adjacent to the west bound lane of Pleasant Run Parkway

(see figure 4). These changes will not only reduce the potential for accidents in this area, but will allow the reversion of approximately 1/4 of an acre of land back to park use.

Swimming Pool

The area immediately adjacent to the swimming pool at Ellenberger Park is currently composed only of concrete surfaces for sunbathing. To provide pool users with an alternative to the concrete areas, it is proposed that a landscaped area be developed along the southwestern edge of the current pool use area. The bath house and office area borders the west edge of the pool area while the parking lot wraps around the north and east edges. The southeast edge is steep and contains a paved path leading to the facilities in other areas of the park. Therefore, the area along the southwest edge is the only appropriate location for the landscaped area.

To increase the number of activities available to current users, a slide of appropriate scale and design will be added to the pool to create an additional activity for pool users. Neither the landscaped area nor the slide will increase the capacity of the pool area.

Ice Skating Rink

Ice skating has been a feature of Ellenberger Park for many years. As one of only two city-owned ice rinks, it serves a larger portion of the county than a typical community park facility. Because of this wider service area, the following proposals for the ice rink were prepared prior to and independently of the Ellenberger Park master planning process.

Phase One

- Enclosure of rink

Phase Two

- Improvement of rink including spectator seating

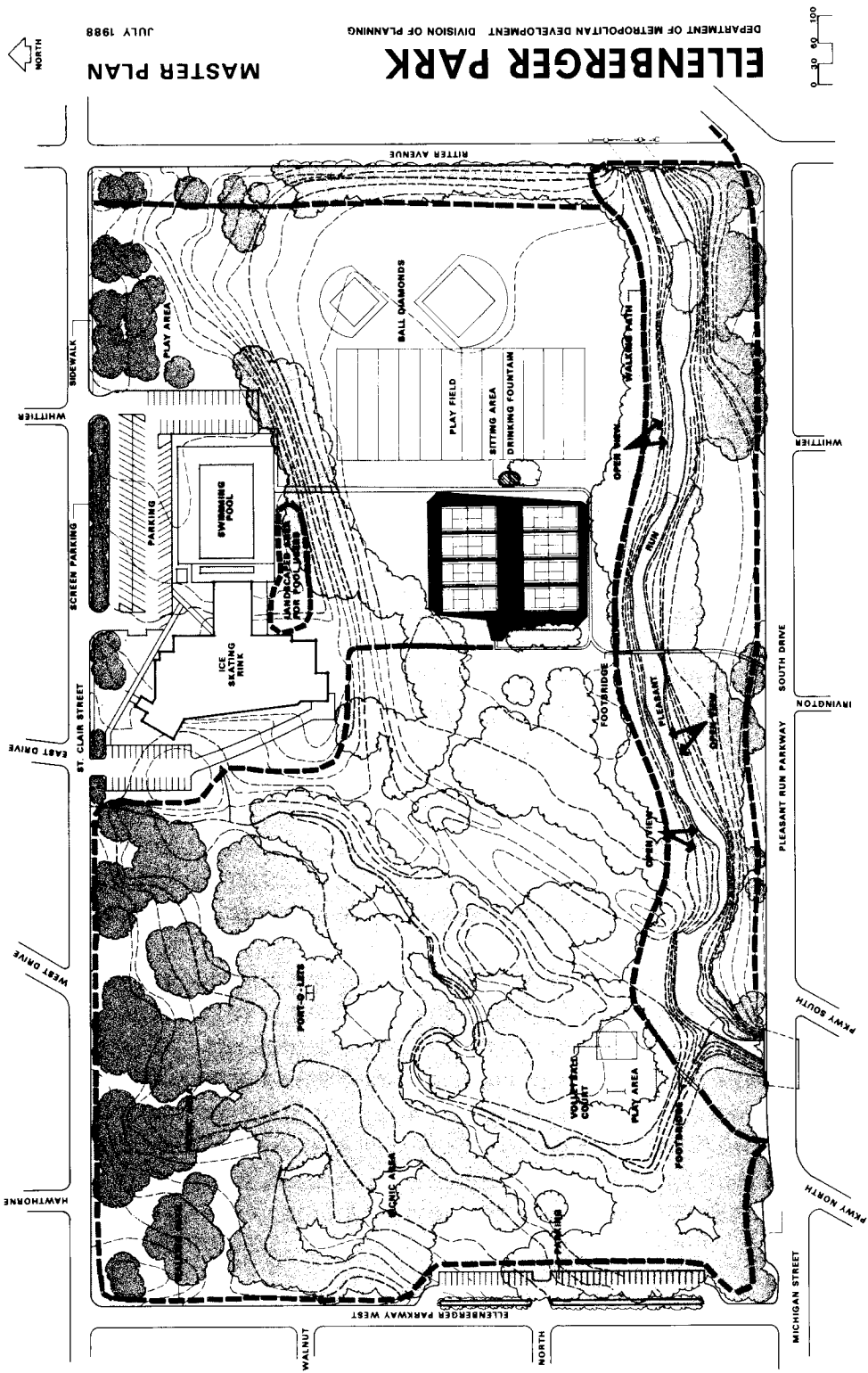
Phase Three

- Construction of public support facilities including a community room, concessions/pro shop, ticket/skate shop, lobby, and restrooms
- Modifications of mechanical systems

Phase Four

- Modification of bathhouse

Figure 2



ELLENBERGER PARK MASTER PLAN

At the commencement of the park master planning process the ice rink was not enclosed. Since that time, however, phase one of the proposed ice rink improvements has been completed.

Sledding Hill

The sledding hill in the East section of the park is very important to the neighborhood; therefore, development should not occur on the hill or near its base.

Football Field

The football field is currently oriented east and west. Play fields and courts should be oriented perpendicular (north and south) to the sun's course so that the sun does not get in the eyes of the players. The master plan therefore calls for the football field to be re-oriented north and south. In addition, because the end zone will now abut the base of the sledding hill, goal posts should be portable, so that they can be removed in the winter.

Baseball and Softball Diamonds

Currently, there is one baseball and one softball diamond at Ellenberger Park. Both of these diamonds are used by the Howe High School baseball and softball teams.

In conjunction with the re-orientation of the football field, the ball diamonds will be moved so that the line between the pitcher's mound and home plate is oriented north and south. Furthermore, because the new location will abut the base of the sledding hill, it is important that the orientation of the diamonds place the outfield toward the hill to maintain this open space area.

Tennis Courts

The tennis courts at Ellenberger Park are used by several different groups including area residents, the National Junior Tennis League, and the Howe High School tennis teams. Currently only four of the eight tennis courts are lighted. Because of the heavy use that the courts receive, the remaining four should also be lighted.

As proposed in the master plan, the tennis courts will remain in their current location, although the deciduous trees overhanging the west edge should be trimmed to prevent surface damage caused by tree litter.

The drinking fountain currently located just west of the tennis courts is proposed to be moved to a location on the east side of the courts. This location will better serve other park facilities. In addition to the drinking fountain, a seating area will be provided for park users waiting to use the courts.

Play Areas

There are currently two play areas in Ellenberger Park. The larger, and most frequently used of the two play areas is located in the northeastern section of the park near St. Clair Street and the swimming pool/ice rink parking lot. The proximity of the parking lot, the relatively high visibility of the equipment, and the shady areas produced by mature trees, all contribute to the intense use of this facility.

The current playground equipment, however, is not in keeping with the overall character of the park nor does it provide a variety of experiences for its users. It is therefore recommended that new equipment be of a neutral color and provide alternative experiences that are linked in a central piece of equipment. Additional trees between the play equipment and the street are proposed because they would provide a partial buffer for the benefit of the users and the adjacent residents but would not prevent surveillance from the street. In addition to these trees, a sidewalk is proposed to run parallel and immediately adjacent to St. Clair Street from Ritter Avenue to the proposed parking area just west of the ice rink. No on-street parking should be allowed next to the playground.

Both shaded and sunny areas should be created in the play area. Seating should be located so that parents can easily watch their children and other nearby park activities. The smaller play area is located in the southwestern portion of the park and includes a slide, two swing sets and a sand box. While it is bordered by trees, the play area itself is fairly open. There is very little visibility to the play area either from the street or from other areas of the park. This play area does not appear to be heavily used. It has been surmised that the use of this area is further reduced by the bus turnaround and the intersection located at the southwest corner of the park. Furthermore, there is no strong relationship between parking areas and the play area.

Recommendations for this area include the removal of the sand box and slide and the addition of a sand volleyball court. The court which is currently located just west of the ice skating rink, should be removed. It is intended that the primary user group of this play area will be families using the adjacent picnic areas.

Parking

There are three basic areas currently designated for parking in Ellenberger Park. Two of these are graveled areas along the north and west edges of the park. This type of parking presents two major problems. First, motorists must back out onto the street, thereby creating a potential traffic hazard. Second, this type of parking presents a visually unattractive appearance both from the street and from the adjacent residential areas.

To counter these problems, the gravel parking area along the north edge of the park should be removed. The graveled area along the west edge of the park should be

redesigned (so that there are limited exit and entrance points) and expanded by approximately 50%. This new parking area should be paved and should be buffered from the residential area by a landscape strip of trees and shrubs.

The third parking area is paved and is located adjacent to the swimming pool/ice skating rink complex. This 110 space parking area also serves the playground, tennis courts, ball diamonds, and playfields. The most significant problem associated with this parking lot is the large expanse of asphalt which is unscreened from bordering residential areas. To counter this, it is proposed that a combination of trees and low shrubs be used along St. Clair Street to serve as a buffer between the parking and residential areas. It should be emphasized, however, that the opportunity for surveillance from the street should be maintained.

A parking lot with approximately 28 spaces is proposed for the area immediately west of the ice skating rink. In addition to serving the ice skating rink and pool facilities, this lot will serve the picnic sites in the northwest corner of the park. This lot will also be well landscaped to reduce its impact on the park and adjacent residential areas.

NORTH
↓

Figure 4 MASTER PLAN PROPOSALS

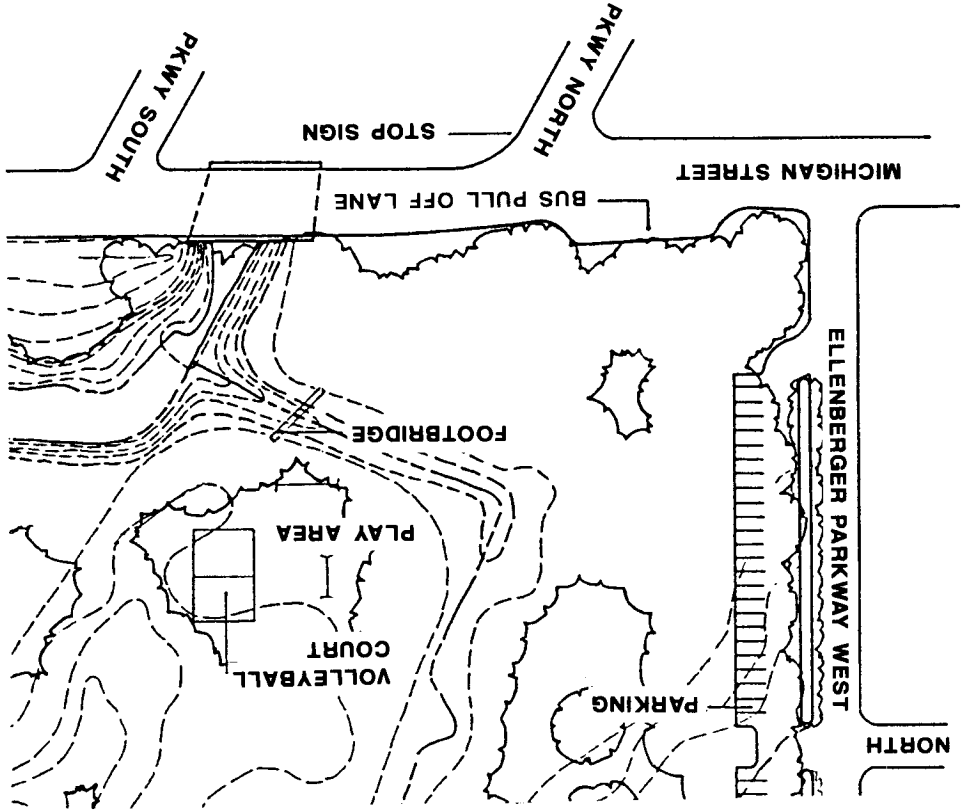
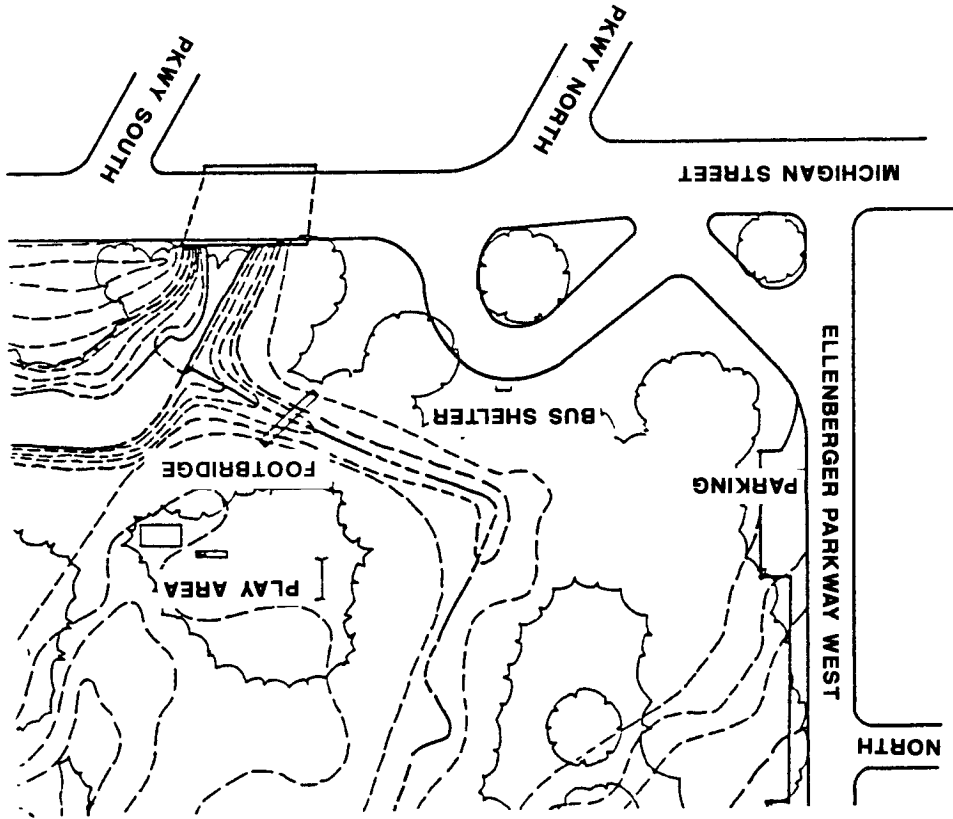


Figure 3 EXISTING CONDITIONS



ELLENBERGER PARK MASTER PLAN

SUMMARY OF MASTER PLAN PROPOSALS

Pleasant Run

- Visually integrate creek into park by selective understory clearing
- Discourage physical access
- Retain existing footbridges

Picnic/Natural Areas

- Plant more trees
- Correct erosion problems
- Enhance opportunities for passive recreation by creating a walking path along perimeter of park

Michigan Street/Ellenberger Parkway Intersection

- Change current configuration of intersection to create a simple "T"
- Remove bus turnaround and replace with a pull off lane to be located parallel to Pleasant Run Parkway North Drive

Swimming Pool

- Develop landscaped area for pool users along southwestern edge of pool
- Add a water slide of appropriate scale and design
- Make modifications to bath house

Ice Skating Rink

- Enclose rink
- Construct spectator seating

- Make mechanical modifications
- Construct auxiliary structure which will contain a community room, a concession area, a ticket booth, a skate shop, a lobby and rest rooms

Sledding Hill

- Maintain as open space for neighborhood use

Football Field

- Move so that field is oriented north and south
- Use portable goal posts

Baseball and Softball Diamonds

- Move so that the line between the pitcher's mound and home plate is oriented north and south

Tennis Court

- Install lighting at the four courts that are not currently lighted
- Create sitting area with water fountain for joint use between ball fields and tennis courts.

Play Areas

PLAYAREA LOCATED IN NORTHEAST SECTION OF PARK

- Remove old equipment
- Install new equipment that has a neutral color and provides alternative experiences in a central piece of equipment
- Create a partial buffer between play and residential areas by planting more trees along Saint Clair Street
- Install sidewalk along Saint Clair Street from Ritter to West side of ice rink

PLAY AREA IN SOUTHWEST SECTION OF PARK

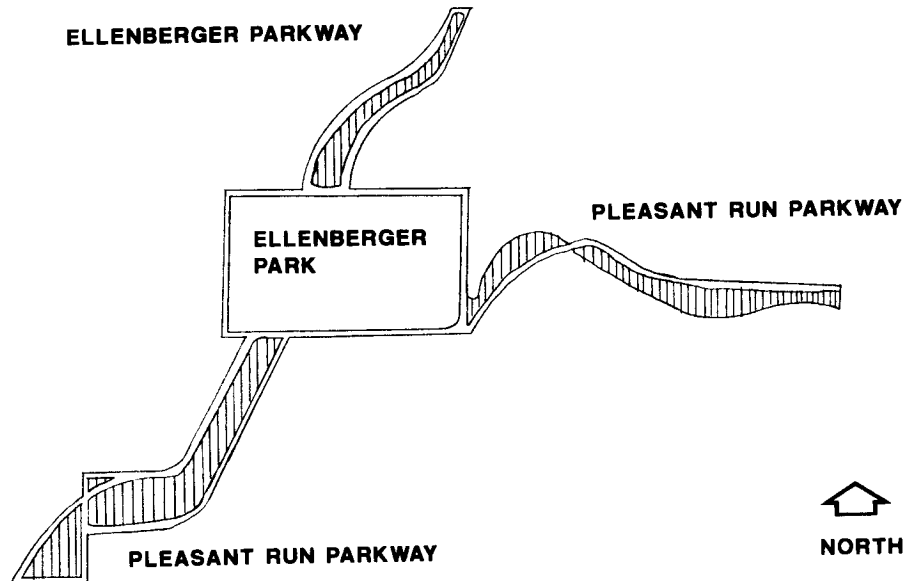
- Remove sandbox and slide
- Construct a sand volleyball court

Parking

- Remove gravel parking along north edge of park
- Redesign, pave, and enlarge parking along west edge of park
- Add parking area along west side of ice rink
- Use landscape strip composed of trees and shrubs to make all parking areas visually unobstrusive.

ADJACENT PARKWAYS

In conjunction with the Ellenberger Park Master Plan, recommendations have also been made for Ellenberger Parkway and two sections of Pleasant Run Parkway. Please refer to figures 5, 6, and 7 for master plan proposals.



Pleasant Run Parkway

As originally planned by George Kessler in the early part of this century, Pleasant Run Parkway is a major visual asset to the City's southeastside. The focus of this parkway is a tree-lined stream approximately eleven miles long. Interspersed with the wooded areas, are large grassy open spaces. This mix of landscape types provides visual interest and recreation opportunities.

As compared to other parkways in the City, Pleasant Run Parkway has relatively low amounts of traffic. This low traffic volume combined with the pleasant scenery creates an ideal route for bicycling. The Mayor's Bicycle Task Force (a group of public and private sector volunteers which was formed to promote safe bicycling within Marion County) has recognized this by erecting signs along Pleasant Run Parkway that designate it as a bicycle route.

The two sections of Pleasant Run Parkway that were studied as part of the Ellenberger Park master plan are: the section which extends from Ritter Avenue to Arlington Avenue and the section which extends from the south border of Ellenberger Park to Washington Street. This second section includes the Kin Hubbard Memorial Triangle.

The section of Pleasant Run which extends from Ritter Avenue to Arlington Avenue currently has curbs. To link the Ellenberger Park path system with the existing sidewalk, which runs along the north side of Pleasant Run Parkway from the bridge over Pleasant Run to Arlington Avenue, an improved jogging/walking path is proposed for the section between Ritter Avenue and the bridge.

The second section of Pleasant Run Parkway which was studied as part of the Ellenberger Park Master Plan, includes the Kin Hubbard Memorial Triangle and the William Forsyth Memorial Plaque. Nine inch curbing has been proposed for both sides of this parkway to prevent parking in the grass areas. A jogging/walking path is proposed for Pleasant Run Parkway North Drive from Ellenberger Park to Washington Street. Unfortunately, this jogging/walking path must cross streets because the bridges over Pleasant Run are too low for pedestrians to pass under.

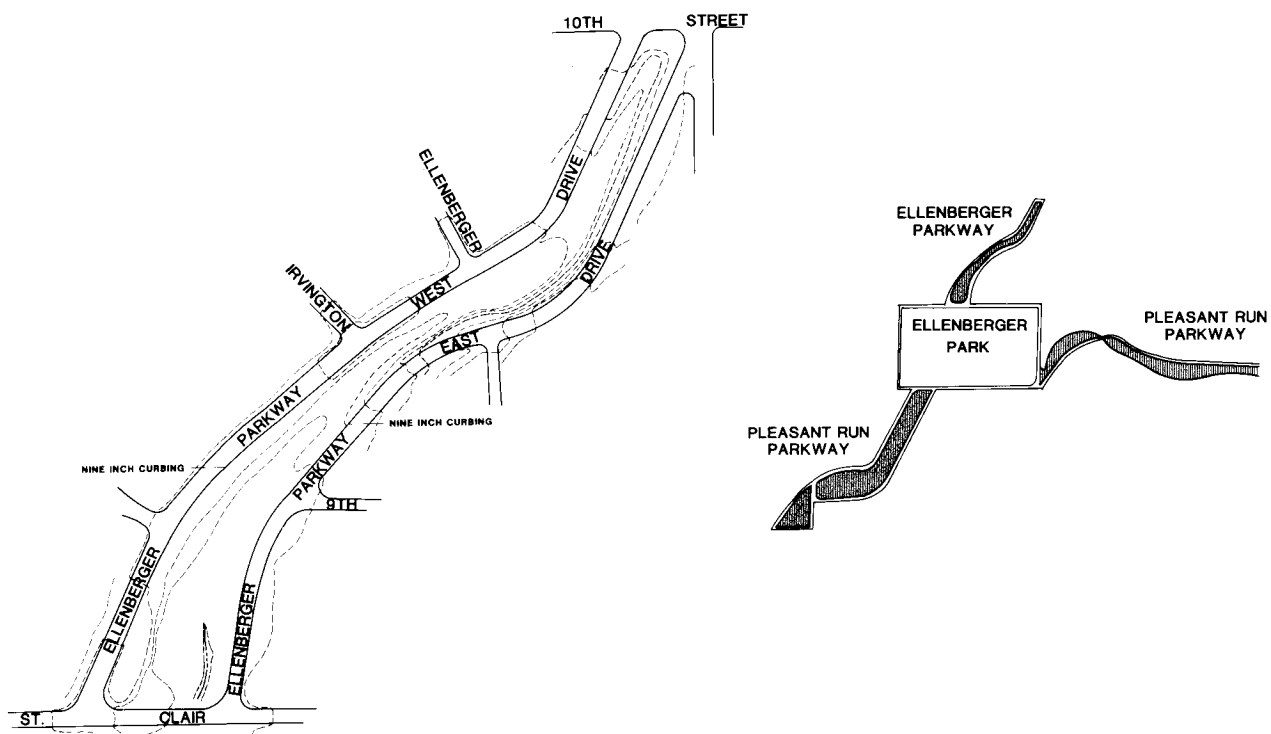
The section of the Parkway immediately north of and adjacent to Washington Street currently contains a pull-off lane which provides access to the William Forsyth commemorative plaque. This plaque honors William Forsyth, an Irvington artist who was a member of the early Hoosier Group of Impressionist artists. The pull-off area is unpaved and unlandscaped. The proposal for this area is to eliminate the pull-off, bring the plaque closer to Washington Street, and install landscape materials. This should be done in conjunction with the state highway project which will replace the bridge immediately west of this area.

In addition to the above proposals, the City should replace the footbridge that had at one time been located at approximately the midpoint between Emerson Avenue and Ellenberger Park. The Kin Hubbard Memorial Triangle is located at the intersection of Pleasant Run Parkway North Drive, Emerson Avenue, and New York Street. It is primarily a visual feature consisting only of earth mounding and landscaping. All edges are curbed, creating a very defined edge. There are two proposals for this area. First, additional landscaping is needed along the Emerson Avenue edge. Second, maintenance of the area should be increased. If this is not possible, modifications to the landscape design should be made. These modifications would need to focus primarily on the ground cover treatment.

Ellenberger Parkway

The character of Ellenberger Parkway is much different than that of Pleasant Run Parkway. Principally, this is due to the lack of a water feature and the fact that it appears designed rather than natural in character. Currently, wood bollards are in place to keep vehicles off the grassy areas of the Parkway. Because of the visual dominance of these bollards, it is proposed that they be replaced with nine inch curbing. The second proposal for this area is to improve the

quality of paths that cross the Parkway by installing a bark mulch surface where the dirt paths currently exist.



ELLENBERGER PARKWAY

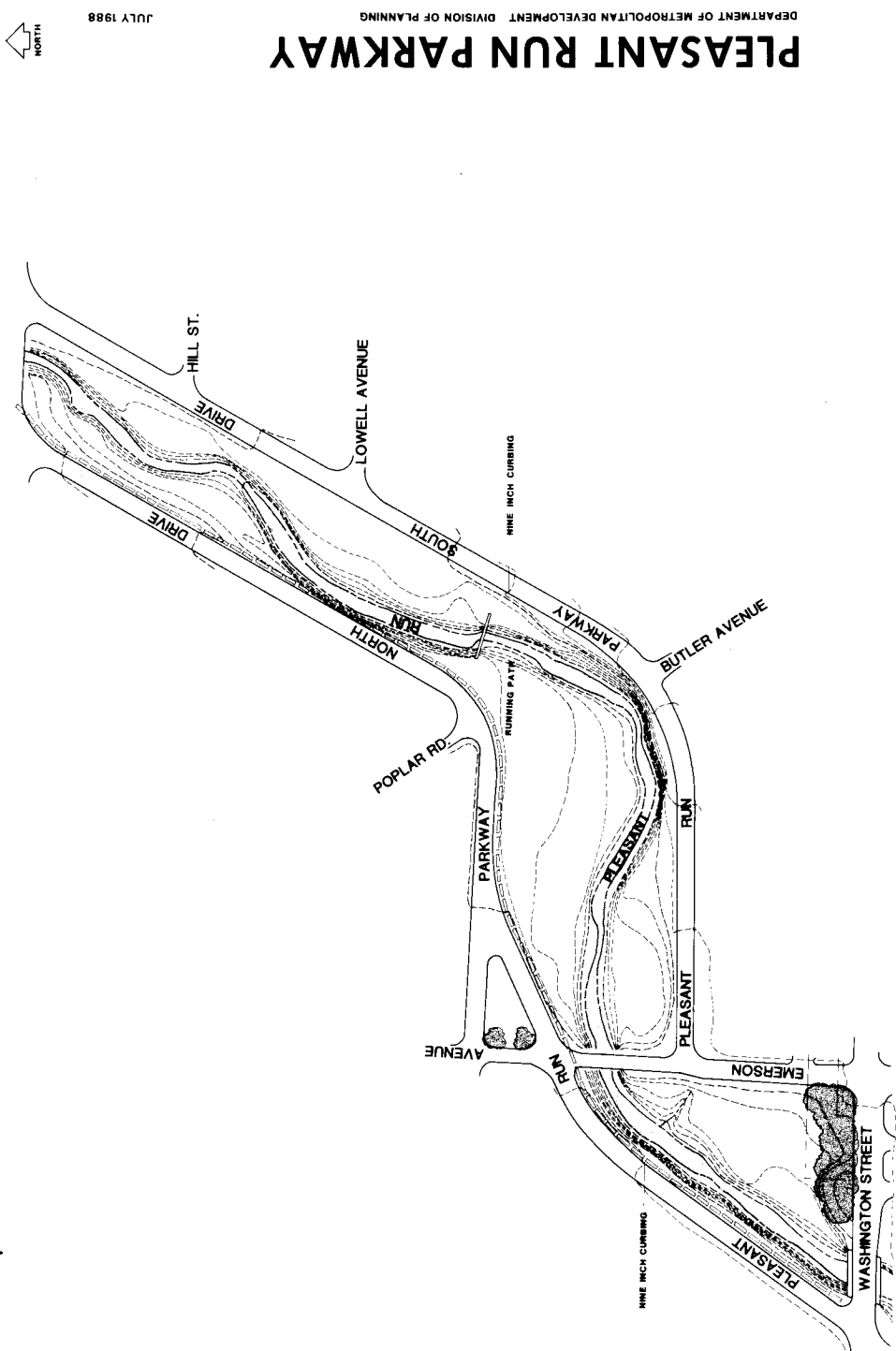
DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT DIVISION OF PLANNING

JULY 1988



Figure 5

Figure 6



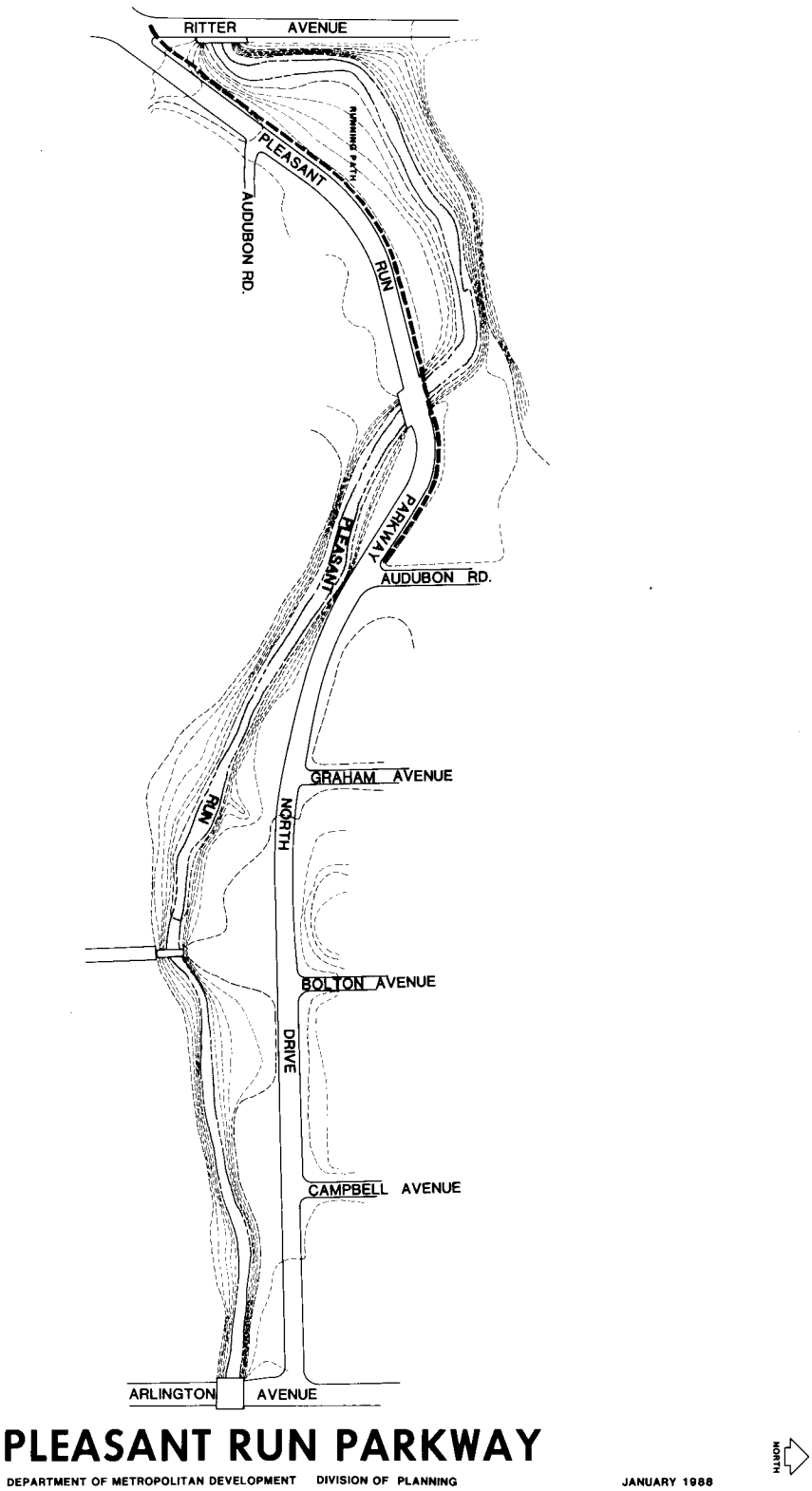
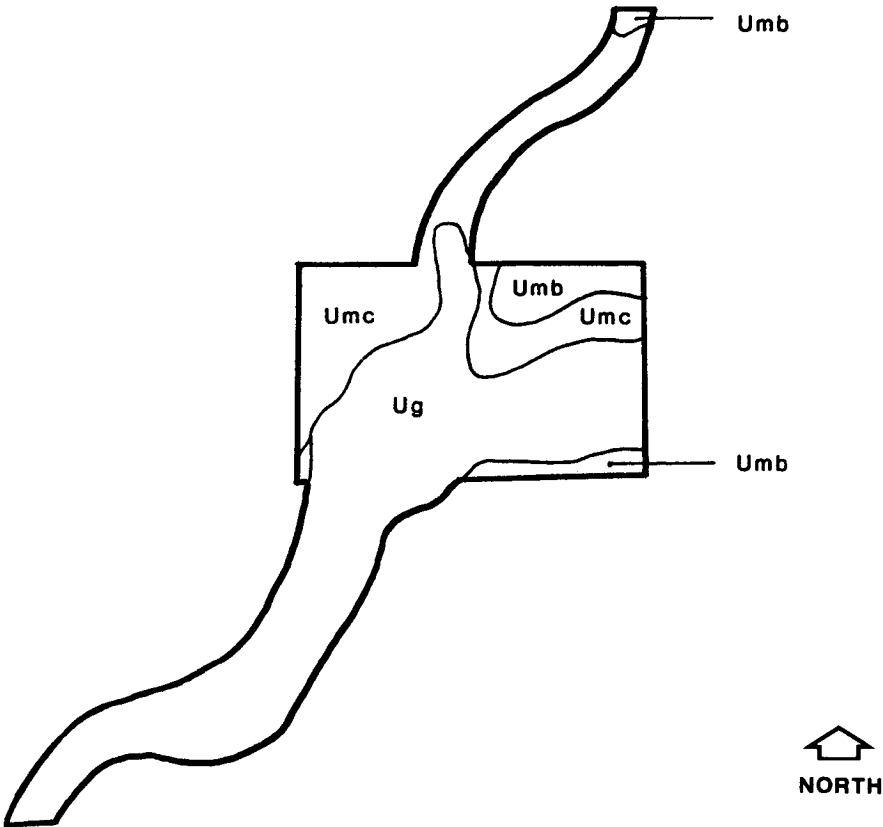


Figure 7

SOIL PROFILE OF ELLENBERGER PARK



RECREATION DEVELOPMENT

Soil Type	Picnic Areas	Playgrounds	Paths and Trails
Ug	Moderate: floods	Severe: floods	Moderate: floods
UmB	Slight	Moderate: slope	Slight
UmC	Moderate: slope	Severe: slope	Slight

BUILDING SITE DEVELOPMENT

Soil Type			Small Commercial Bldgs.	Local Roads and Streets
Ug	Severe: floods	Severe: floods		Severe: floods
Umb	Moderate: shrink-swell, low strength	Severe: low strength		Severe: low strength
Umc	Severe: slope	Severe: low strength		Severe: low strength

WILDLIFE HABITAT POTENTIALS

Soil Type			Woodland Wildlife	Wetland Wildlife
Ug	Good	Good		Poor
Umb	Good	Good		Very Poor
Umc	Good	Good		Very Poor

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

There are no major woodland management concerns for any of the three soil types.

* Information obtained from the Soil Survey of Marion County, Indiana.

MASTER PLANNING PROCESS:
PUBLIC MEETINGS

December 2, 1987	Workshop was conducted to identify issues important to the community.
February 23, 1988	Preliminary plans were presented.
May 4, 1988	Adjusted preliminary plans were presented
August 31, 1988	Final plans were presented to and approved by the community members in attendance.

